

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 and 5-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by U.S. patent 6,164,861 (Maughan).

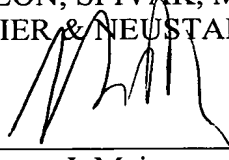
Applicants wish to thank Examiner Rodriguez for the courtesy of an interview on October 23, 2006, at which time this rejection was discussed, as were possible claim amendments. Specifically, Applicants pointed out that Maughan is directed to a ball joint and teaches an assembly in which the ball cannot be removed from the socket by pulling. Thus the diameter of the head of the ball is larger than that of the opening of the socket. It was therefore tentatively agreed that Claim 1, as presently amended to recite that a diameter of the head of the projection is smaller than a diameter of the socket at a portion of the socket opposite that protruding from the one of the opposite surfaces of the cover body, whereby the head of the projection may be introduced into the socket from a side of the socket opposite the cover body, defines over this reference.

It was also noted during the interview that Maughan fails to teach the flange and annular groove arrangement of the present invention. It was therefore also tentatively agreed that the subject matter of new Claim 10, which recites a tubular grommet having an annular groove and being held in the socket by the flange fitted in the annular groove, defines over this reference.

Applicants therefore believe that the present application is in a condition for allowance and respectfully solicit an early Notice of Allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

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